



Police – Counter Terrorism security advice for events

Dear event planner,

The recent terrorist attacks in Manchester and London have once again demonstrated to us all that the UK does face a real threat from terrorism and crowded places whether by their generic nature or created due to a planned event remain an attractive target.

Whilst not to cause alarm it is a useful reminder to acknowledge that the National Threat level from Terrorism is SEVERE – an attack is highly likely. Further information about **threat levels** can be found [here](#).

With that in mind we would advise all 'crowded places' event organisers to consider Counter Terrorism options and contingencies when planning forthcoming events.

The Government has recently re-published their generic guidance document covering such advice in depth. A link to this publication (**National Counter Terrorism Security Office crowded places guidance - June 2017**) can be found [here](#).

What is hostile Reconnaissance?

Terrorists very often undertake some form of reconnaissance before carrying out an attack. They may do this in vehicles or on foot, alone or in small groups, using cameras or other recording devices or making written notes or speaking into mobile phones. In periods of heightened alert, it is vital to remain vigilant, trust your instincts and report possible reconnaissance to the police. Where possible record a description of the person(s) or vehicles or if safe to do so obtain an image (photographic or CCTV).

Signs to look for:

Individuals or groups with a significant interest being taken during the event set up stage (or during event) regarding the existing security measures present such as physical security measures, access gates, CCTV, access control or interest in the human resources employed such as security staff numbers and locations/routines.

Persons:-

- People taking pictures, filming overtly or covertly, making notes or sketching of the security measures around events (potentially could be innocent to be tourists). Particular attention to entrance/exits points.
- Persons in possession of global positioning systems (GPS), maps, plans etc. of the event, venue, local area.



- Simple observation such as staring or quickly looking away.
- Standing or loitering in the same area on numerous occasions with no apparent reasonable explanation. Undertaking activity which appears inconsistent with nature of location/building.
- Walking perimeter routes, frequently re-tracing same route.
- Asking questions – any VIPs attending, security numbers/routines, evacuation procedures, probing for further information. Enquiring where staff 'hang out' or local amenities frequented. Wanting details of a building's layout.
- Appear to be making notes on numbers of persons, vehicles and timings.

(Vehicles:-

- Parked outside venue, event perimeter with one or more people remaining in the vehicle, for longer than would be considered usual or in the same location frequently.
- Driving around perimeter, up and down same roads or erratic driving.
- Vehicle may appear overweight
- Same vehicle returning but with differing occupants, often parking in same location.

Testing security:-

- Vehicles, packages, luggage left unattended and observing security response.
- Unusual or unexpected deliveries, outside normal hours.
- Attempting access to location on foot or in vehicle.
- False activation of alarms (security/fire) to assess evacuation routines and/or emergency services response.
- Creating insecurities in perimeter fencing and observing response or repairs.

Remember hostile reconnaissance may also involve using disguises or face covering/motorcycle helmets or pretending to be another regular user of the location (examples include a contractor, delivery person or pretending to have a car breakdown to remain static outside perimeter).



Other tactics include following members of staff away from venue to observe routines, learn identities and activities.

The above principles also apply post event when locations are being dismantled or returned to normal operating routines if the event /location will be used again for similar occasion as observing now may be planning for an attack on the next occasion the event is operating.

Measures to combat against Hostile reconnaissance:-

- The key is the promotion of security awareness and resulting extra vigilance by all involved in an event including the crew, staff, volunteers, security team, contractors, event exhibitors and vendors.
- Create a culture of challenging unknown visitors both pre event and during.
- Ensure staff and vehicle passes are carried/displayed on entering event/location or restricted areas. Keep these secure and out of sight when away from the event.
- Report any suspicious activity.

Suspicious packages

The below is some simple guidance when considering located items:-

The **HOT** protocol may be used to inform your judgement:

Is it **Hidden**?

- Has the item been deliberately concealed or is it obviously hidden from view?

Obviously suspicious?

- Does it have wires, circuit boards, batteries, tape, liquids or putty-like substances visible?
- Do you think the item poses an immediate threat to life?

Is the item **Typical** of what you would expect to find in this location?

- Most lost property is found in locations where people congregate. Ask if anyone has left the item.
- If the item is assessed to be unattended rather than suspicious, examine further before applying lost property procedures.

After initial assessment if you believe it to be suspicious then start considering crowd safety, move away at least 100m for a small item such as a briefcase or rucksack and contact the Police by 999.



Vehicle as a weapon (VAW)

A vehicle by itself can also be used with hostile intent to breach a perimeter, ram and damage infrastructure, or as a weapon to injure and kill people.

This is referred to as a 'vehicle as a weapon' attack. The use of a vehicle as a weapon is a low complexity methodology and has been used by terrorists to target crowded places as seen in recent UK and European attacks. A broad range of vehicles can cause significant loss of life and serious injury.

Attacks using vehicle as a weapon requires little or no training thus are within the capability of most individuals. Online terrorist media continues to inspire and incite individuals to use a vehicle as a weapon as an attack.

Full Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM) is normally permanent features found in locations to protect critical infrastructure or events with high risk. Counter Terrorism Security Advisers (CTSAs) advise organisations and local authorities regarding these more permanent mitigation structures.

However temporary measures can be considered for events such as concrete or water filled barriers or using a vehicle of size/weight. However such use of these temporary measures should be subjected to a risk assessment as to whether placement of any such item is safe, will not cause damage to existing street surfaces and importantly does not impede emergency access or evacuation routes.

For example a large heavy goods vehicle may act as a visible deterrent and provide a level of protection (not full mitigation) against a VAW but a driver would always need to be immediately available to safely relocate the vehicle in an emergency.



Run Hide Tell – stay safe: Terrorist Firearms and Weapons Attack

Firearms and weapons attacks are rare in the UK. The 'stay safe' principles give some simple actions to consider at an incident and the information that armed officers may need in the event of a weapons or firearm attack:

RUN

- escape if you can
- consider the safest options
- is there a safe route? Run if not hide
- can you get there without exposing yourself to greater danger?
- insist others leave with you
- leave belongings behind

HIDE

- if you cannot run, hide
- find cover from gunfire
- if you can see the attacker, they may be able to see you. cover from view does not mean you are safe, bullets go through glass, brick, wood and metal
- find cover from gunfire e.g. substantial brickwork/heavy reinforced walls
- be aware of your exits
- try not to get trapped
- be quiet, silence your phone
- lock/barricade yourself in
- move away from the door

TELL

- Call 999 – What do the police need to know? If you cannot speak or make a noise listen to the instructions given to you by the call taker:
- location – Where are the suspects?
- direction – Where did you last see the suspects?
- descriptions – Describe the attacker, numbers, features, clothing, weapons etc.
- further information – Casualties, type of injury, building information, entrances, exits, hostages etc.
- stop other people entering the building if it is safe to do

Further information, videos and leaflets regarding the **RUN, HIDE, TELL** campaign can be found [here](#)

Further information regarding the national CT campaigns and CT security advice can be found on the **NaCTSO website**, link [here](#)

Hampshire Constabulary
Strategic Operations Department
July 2017